

Session 12-07, a Regular Meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Bumpo Bremicker at 5:33 p.m. on May 17, 2012 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS LOWNEY, LILLIBRIDGE, BREMICKER, AND BELL

TELEPHONIC: COMMISSIONERS ARCHIBALD AND BRANN

STAFF: JULIE ENGBRETSSEN, PLANNING TECHNICIAN
MIKE ILLG, RECREATION SPECIALIST
ANGIE OTTESON, PARKS MAINTENANCE COORDINATOR
CAREY MEYER, PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR
RENEE KRAUSE, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK I

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chair Bremicker called for a motion to approve the agenda.

LOWNEY/BELL – SO MOVED.

Commissioner Lowney noted that some items requested
VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES (*Minutes are approved during Regular Meetings Only*)

A. Minutes for the April 19, 2012 Regular Meeting

Chair Bremicker called for a motion to approve the minutes.

LOWNEY/BELL – MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES.

Commissioner Bell noted that the motion should be “Failed” not “carried” regarding Commissioner Archibald’s Conflict of interest.

The minutes were approved by consensus of the commission.

PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

It was determined that Mr. Arsenault should comment under the Public Hearing for the Jack Gist item.

There were no comments from the audience on the agenda.

VISITORS

A. Miranda Weiss, Homer Playground Project

Chair Bremicker noted that Ms. Weiss was detained receiving a materials shipment and would be delayed in her arrival.

Ms. Weiss reported that the Build Week starts on Sunday and runs through the week. She updated the status of the materials expected and received so far. Setup is going to be conducted on Saturday and they will use a site plan that created for the project. They still need volunteers for labor, child care and providing meals. There will be prizes throughout the week for volunteers as incentives to come out and help.

Ms. Weiss commented on the landscaping and HoPP will be providing matching funds for a Fish and Wildlife Grant for Learning Landscapes in the lower Day Use Area (the area specifically bounded by the yellow fencing.) She added that HoPP wanted to help out as much as possible.

Ms. Weiss responded to questions posed by Commissioners on landscaping.

Chair Bremicker thanked Ms. Weiss for coming in and providing an update.

B. Jessica Marx, Homer Softball Association

Ms. Marx provided a summary on what improvements and projects that Association has accomplished since her last visit. She stated that her main goal was to get some of the Commission's attention on Jack Gist Park since all the focus has been on the new playground at Karen Hornaday Park. She noted that they have created a small playground that was purchased by the Association. They have been improving and maintaining the fields and building dugouts, etc. The third field has had some improvements by the City in the last year. Any night of the week there is plenty happening at the Park. They have lots of volunteers and would love to have a snack shack and restrooms. They do have a volunteer base and some funding so they would like to see Jack Gist become a really nice City park.

In response to questions from the Commission Ms. Marx responded that drainage, removal of brush, installation of bleachers for the third field to make it more spectator friendly is high on the list. She would like to advocate for tournaments to be held at Jack Gist park.

There were a few comments on reviewing parks long and short term needs over the winter months by the commission for city staff and a recommendation from Chair Bremicker to consult with the Contractor who has worked at the park and get an estimate on doing some of the items that they would like to see at the park.

Chair Bremicker thanked Ms. Marx for coming and updating the commission.

C. Hans Rinke, Area Forester, State of Alaska Division of Forestry – Fire Safety

Ms. Engebretsen stated that Mr. Rinke will not be able to make the presentation on Fire Safety.

RECONSIDERATION

There were no items scheduled for reconsideration.

STAFF AND COUNCIL REPORTS/COMMITTEE REPORTS/BOROUGH REPORTS

A. Community Recreation – Mike Illg

Mr. Illg provided a brief summary on the status of the HERC and requested the Commission plan on doing a walk-through of the building in the next month or two to get some ideas on what can be done with the building.

He then gave a brief update on all pending items: needs assessment, renewing agreement with the Borough on use of school facilities.

Chair Bremicker appreciated the update on HERC and asked Mr. Illg if he needed the commission to express support whether by memorandum or resolution they could do that.

The commission also agreed by consensus to schedule a worksession on June 7, 2012 at noon to visit the HERC building.

B. Staff Report – Julie Engebretsen, Planning Technician/GIS

Ms. Engebretsen summarized her report for the record and responded to a few questions from the Commissioners regarding items not on the agenda. Ms. Engebretsen noted that she is hoping to provide the requested information for this meeting at the June meeting after the playground is built.

She commented on the work starting on the Spit Comprehensive Plan by the Planning Commission.

C. Parks Maintenance – Angie Otteson

Ms. Otteson provided a brief update on the repainting of Ben Walters Park restroom, they have started mowing, beautification letters went out, the green house is full and planting is scheduled for June 2, 2012. Summer camping has started and she should have a full crew in a week. She has provided information on signage but wanted to comment that there is limited signage in most parks and that is something that could be discussed and included in this budget talk for 2013.

Ms. Otteson responded to some questions and comments on Adopt a Park program offers and agreed to speak to the Rotary members thanking them for their efforts in the Adopt a Park Program. The Information Kiosk will be installed as soon as possible near the restroom and Memorial Garden.

She noted that Public Works is aware that the structure on the Spit used for a Picnic shelter is in need of repair. The commission expressed concern and liability to the City if it fell while in use. She did note that there is no universal standard on signage for parks however there is the standard of welcome to the park and directing the visitors to various areas within the park. She did note that Karen Hornaday would be a great place to start; another consideration was Jack Gist Park had no signage. She responded that pedestrian traffic has priority but vehicular traffic is not prohibited on Bishop's Beach to the east.

D. Kachemak Drive Path Committee Report – Bumpo Bremicker

Chair Bremicker commented that the revised resolution on the Path went back before Council and the Council rejected that one and amended the original resolution striking references to construction. Chair Bremicker noted that the Council still has concerns regarding costs, maintenance and right of way issues plus recommendation from the Transportation Advisory Committee. He has some concerns and really needs to have staff help the committee on this issue.

A brief discussion on some of the additional requirements requested from Council ensued.

F. Advisory Planning Commission – Memorandum dated May 10, 2012 Re: Implementing the Comprehensive Plan

Ms. Engebretsen stated this was advisory from the Planning Commission to all the city commissions who would be interested and if there are issues on the Spit regarding recreation and parks then it will be sent to this commission.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Jack Gist Park – Land Use Agreement and Permit

Chair Bremicker opened the Public Hearing. He asked for information from staff regarding the document before them.

Mike Illg, Recreation Specialist introduced the item and why it was brought forward to the Commission.

Chair Bremicker invited the audience to comment and reminded them of the three minute time limit.

Mr. Arsenault, city resident, property owner bordering the park and proposed location where the Disc Golf Course is to be located. He is against the placement of the Disc Golf Course in the lower areas of the wooded section of the park. He provided signatures of 16 property owners in the neighborhood who were against having a Disc Golf Course in the park. He suggested finding 10 acres that is private. He noted that this location was between the existing fence and his property. He was not amenable to any of the recommendations or suggestions from the commission.

Mr. Edan Badajos, representing the disc golfers in the area and the Jack Gist Park Association. They have been working for the last 3-4 years to get a public course in Homer. They have put in over 100 volunteer hours cleaning and preparing the proposed area for the course; they have raised \$3000 for equipment; there is a whole crew to install the course when approved. He commented on the efforts to be good neighbors and outlined their plans for the golf course. The number of attendance at this course would be far less than the reported numbers at a smaller park in Anchorage. He responded to questions regarding hours of operation; developing curriculum that is youth focused; providing a buffer zone between property owners and the course; alternate locations at other city facilities; required number of acreage is 10.

Judson Hancock, disc golfers since 1995, plays a big part of his life, has played in tournaments and courses nationwide, he commented in favor of the course. He stated that he will do everything in his power as a citizen and avid player to make sure the property owners concerns are considered.

Kurtis Schoenberg, commented in favor of disc golf at Jack Gist Park. He lived in Anchorage and highly supports installation of a course in Homer. He commented on the recent negative news on incidents at the course in Anchorage. He believes that this would be a great addition to the recreational opportunities available in Homer.

Mike Illg, Recreational Specialist commented on the Disc Golf movement and has been contacted by other cities on the Peninsula. He believes that the time is now with the upswing in focus on parks and recreation.

Thad Gunther, resident, commented in support of installing a disc golf course in Homer. He related the work that has been done by volunteers and the number of years that this has been going on, the increase in participation; benefits to the youth in the area. One more thing that is available in Homer and Things happen not only on the water but on the land too.

Carey Meyer, Public Works Director commented on the agreement and requirement from Council to formalize agreements between users of a city own park and it is the intent to use this agreement as the template for other parks. He outlined what the agreement would provide to the City and users of the park and facilities. He provided a brief outline of the intent of the agreement. Mr. Meyer responded to some questions regarding insurance , non-profits, etc.

Chair Bremicker closed the Public Hearing.

LOWNEY/BELL – MOVED TO APPROVE THE JACK GIST LAND USE AGREEMENT AND PERMIT BETWEEN THE CITY OF HOMER, THE JACK GIST RECREATIONAL PARK ASSOCIATION, AND MOOSE PRETZEL DISC GOLF CLUB.

There was a brief discussion on the concerns expressed by the property owners; relocating the first two baskets; the city has a right to use their land; installation of a wooden fence or barrier; installation of signage regarding hours and noise levels; specific operating hours included in the agreement; developing a universal agreement with all neighbors of city owned parks.

LOWNEY/BELL - MOVED TO INCLUDE AMENDING THE AGREEMENT TO INCLUDE OPERATING HOURS AND INSTALLING A FENCE ALONG THE PROPERTY OWNERS TO THE SOUTH.

There was a discussion to consider alternative to wood fencing, maintenance, and including operating hours in the agreement.

VOTE.(amendment) YES. BRANN, ARCHIBALD, BREMICKER

VOTE. NO. LOWNEY, BELL

Motion carried.

LOWNEY/BELL – MOVED TO AMEND THE MOTION TO READ A NATURAL FENCE.

There was no discussion on the amendment.

VOTE. YES. BELL. LOWNEY. BRANN. ARCHIBALD. BREMICKER.

Motion carried.

Main motion as amended reads:

MOVED THAT THE PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION APPROVES THE JACK GIST LAND USE AGREEMENT AND PERMIT BETWEEN THE CITY OF HOMER, THE JACK GIST RECREATIONAL PARK ASSOCIATION, AND MOOSE PRETZEL DISC GOLF CLUB AND BE AMENDED TO INCLUDE OPERATING TIMES AND INSTALLATION OF A NATURAL FENCE BETWEEN THE PROPERTY OWNERS AND THE DISC COURSE.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. (Main) YES. ARCHIBALD, BELL, LOWNEY, BRANN, BREMICKER.

Motion carried.

Chair Bremicker called for a short recess at 7:30 p.m. The meeting was called back to order at 7:37 p.m.

Chair Bremicker noted the arrival of Commissioner Lillibridge at 7:35 p.m.

PENDING BUSINESS

A. Uniform Park Signage

There was no discussion on this topic.

B. Jack Gist Park – Land Use Agreement and Permit

There was no additional discussion on this subject.

C. Karen Hornaday Park Status Update

Chair Bremicker opened this item for discussion.

Commissioner Lowney reviewed recommendations and suggestions that were made at the last worksession at the park by the Commissioners. She noted that several of the concerns have been or are being addressed. The following was discussed during the worksession.

- Drainage has been the biggest concern, the ditching around the furthest field needs to be redone and a French drain has been installed at the bottom of the hill for the lower ball field. The furthest field has standing water still. She is not sure of the source.
- Removal of the storage connexes
- Removal of discarded fencing in various locations
- Removal of discarded posts and caps for pilings
- Fill material is needed in the lower areas where the access road to the back field is located
- Make the access road to the back field an actual road
- Re-purpose the t-ball field into some other green space area since it is seldom used
- Block access to an off road vehicle trail that was created along the road into the park
- Walked the area along Fairview Avenue that would be a good location for a trail
- Discussed installing a footbridge over the ditch at the top of Wright Street
- Removing dirt and grading along Woodard Creek and begin clean up. It appears that it is becoming a storage area.
- Recommendation to top or trim the alders located between the fields to enhance the view shed.
- Placement of speed bumps.

Discussion ensued regarding drainage issues with the back ball field; connexes located near the back ball field; status of the red shed and final decision on relocating or repurposing it; campground vegetation clearing; space appropriate for the campground host; clarification on access points to the park; cleaning up the park and getting rid of any debris that can be an attractant to kids and presents a possible liability to the city; the special access road and condition;

Staff recommended that after build week the Commission can address those issues and can take action at their next meeting. Ms. Engebretsen noted that certain items are Little League issues and that Ms. Otteson may be able to speak to them about those issues.

Mr. Meyer advised the Commission to work on the Parks and Recreation Budget; only \$15,000 is given to deal with maintenance, etc. of all parks in the city. The commission will use their time better if they focus on getting a larger budget. He commented on the status of the red shed in regards to possibly opening it up for use as a picnic shelter. There is still a lot of discussion to be had on the building and the commission will be involved in any decision made on its future. He further noted that since contracts have been awarded he will have the structural integrity of the building reviewed.

Volunteer efforts could clear up some of the items on the list and assist staff getting some of the items previously listed completed.

Commissioner Lillibridge suggested meeting at the Playground but Commissioner Lowney felt that they should also recognize the efforts and work that has been accomplished by the Little League group and that the Commission has overlooked them.

There was no further discussion.

D. Commissioner Attendance at Council Meetings

Chair Bremicker introduced the item for discussion and asked for volunteers.

The following Commissioners volunteered for the following Council meetings:

June – Brann and anytime a back up is needed if available.

July and October – Lillibridge

August – Bell

September – Archibald

November – Lowney

December – Bremicker

Ms. Krause thanked the commissioners and stated that the schedule will be included in each packet.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Cruise Ship Passenger Enhancement Project

Chair Bremicker opened the item for discussion.

There was a brief discussion on the recommended locations for the Public Restrooms. Mr. Meyer provided a brief description and goal of the project and trails. He then noted that the action being requested from the commission was approval of the proposed locations within the parks. He further added that this will add 6 additional restrooms and three miles of trail for Ms. Otteson to maintain and she is already hard pressed to maintain what the city currently has and the advocacy from the commissioners are extremely important this budget cycle.

A brief discussion occurred on keeping the money from camping fees and such in the parks budget not just the general budget.

Ms. Krause called for a point of order to bring the discussion back on topic.

The commissioners approved the recommendation on the location for the restrooms in the End of the Road Park by consensus; the Commission preferred location A which was closest to Heath Street for WKFL Park.

BELL/LILLIBRIDGE - MOVED THAT THE PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION APPROVES THE LOCATION AS RECOMMENDED FOR THE END OF THE ROAD PARK RESTROOM AND LOCATION A FOR THE RESTROOM IN WKFL PARK.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

B. Scheduling and Planning Park Day 2012

Chair Bremicker introduced the item for discussion noting that last year nothing was done and this year they actually have a small budget.

Commissioner Lowney suggested doing something constructive instead of a bar-b-que. Chair Bremicker noted previously they offered a cookout to bring people to the chosen park and use the park. They always try to have it at a different park to introduce the park to the residents. Commissioner Lillibridge suggested Jack Gist and reminded the commission that they did suggest some needs such as sand box, snack shack, etc. and it would be good to do something there and on their needs list.

Chair Bremicker suggested that they decide a day, time and location now and then discuss the details at the next meeting.

There was a brief discussion on grilling, and helping the group at Jack Gist Park. Anything planned should be coordinated with the group at Jack Gist.

The commission agreed on Jack Gist Park and later part of summer.

Commissioner Lowney stressed she wanted to throw money at a project the group wanted not on food.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

A. Strategic Plan 2012

B. Commission Annual Calendar 2012

C. Resolution 11-90(S) and Information Packet, Council Meeting Minutes Excerpt April 23, 2012

There was brief discussion on the informational items in the packet and some clarification on the Resolution approved by Council on the Kachemak Drive Pathway and the process. Ms. Krause explained some of the concerns expressed by the Transportation Advisory Committee and the Path Committee is on their August agenda. Ms. Krause stated she has provided the information packet for that meeting that was presented to Council.

Ms. Engebretsen elaborated on the direction the Committee should take in getting the Council to approve what the desired result is, amending the resolution again is not the answer.

Chair Bremicker stated the committee will work on this submit it to the Commission in July and will be ready to submit to Transportation in August.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

Lindianne Sarno, representing the EDC commented on the value to the community that parks and recreation brings and she complimented their work.

COMMENTS OF THE COUNCIL MEMBER (if one is assigned)

There were no City Council members present.

COMMENTS OF STAFF MEMBERS

Ms. Engebretsen commented that it was a great meeting and asked if the Chair would come and talk with staff on what will be on the agenda.

Ms. Krause commented on the items that were not on the agenda and these could be on the next agenda.

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Lowney agreed that it was a good meeting, would like the following on the June agenda; Town Center; pocket park; when groups have done something the commission should present a formal thank you to these groups, presenting a card or something. She reminded the commission about the HERC building walk through and to visit the Jack Gist Park to get more of a visual on what the issues are at that park.

Commissioner Bell commented it was a good meeting, appreciated staff efforts, honor to be included and have the opportunity.

Commissioner Archibald had no comments.

Commissioner Brann thanked all the efforts of the staff and good information. It was a good meeting. He was in Rockford, Illinois and he saw the world's largest collection of Circus Wagons today. He looked forward to being back in Homer.

Commissioner Lillibridge apologized for being late and summarized her understanding of the earlier part of the meeting. She reminded the commission the need for volunteers at the Playground especially toward the later part of the week. She requested the budget discussion for June. She also requested a discussion on the Red Shed as she did not want it languishing all summer.

COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR

Chair Bremicker commented that it was a long meeting but there were a lot of issues and also commented that he hoped the Disc Golf did not go on and on and hoped it worked itself out shortly. He will definitely visit the park.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Commission Chair Bremicker adjourned the meeting at 9:15 p.m. The next regular meeting is THURSDAY, JUNE 21, 2012 at 5:30 p.m. at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers.

RENEE KRAUSE, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK I

Approved: